Responsible conduct of research

Guidelines and recommendations from the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity
Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK

- Founded 1991
- 10 board members, appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland for three year terms
- Current term 1.2.2019 - 31.1.2022
- Office situated independently at the Federation of the Finnish Learned Societies, Helsinki (Tieteellisten seurain valtuuskunta)
Members 1.2.2019 - 31.1.2022

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TENK’s functions

• makes proposals and issues statements to governmental authorities
• acts as an expert body working towards the resolution of ethical issues relating to research
• takes initiative in advancing research ethics and promotes discussion concerning research ethics
• monitors international developments in the field and takes actively part in international cooperation
• informs the public about research ethics
• First national guidelines in Finland for the prevention, handling and investigation of misconduct and fraud in scientific research were published in 1994
• ”Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland” (2012)
The Finnish guidelines consist of the following parts:

- Definition of the responsible conduct of research/good research practice
- Classification of violation against the responsible conduct of research
- Procedure for handling the misconduct of research
RCR guidelines 2/3

• provide researchers with a model for the responsible conduct of research
• voluntary commitment by the research community to adhere to them, and to increase awareness of the principles of research integrity
• apply to all academic disciplines in Finland

List of the committed organisations: www.tenk.fi
Violations of the responsible conduct of research

1. Research misconduct (vilppi)
   • Fabrication (sepittäminen)
   • Falsification/misrepresentation (vääristely)
   • Plagiarism (plagiointi)
   • Misappropriation (anastus)

2. Disregard for the responsible conduct of research (piittaamattomuus hyvästä tieteellisestä käytännöstä)
Other guidelines by TENK

- Template for researcher’s curriculum vitae (2012 → revision 2020)
- The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland (2019)
- Supervision of doctoral dissertations and their review process in Finland with a special emphasis on research integrity. (English edition 2017)
- Agreeing on authorship. Recommendation for research publications (2018)
Open webpage for the whole research community, journalists and general public

To provide introductions, recommendations to and guidance on the main issues in research ethics, integrity and science communication
Research Integrity Advisers
RI Advisers 1/2

• a system initiated by TENK in 2017

• a network of research integrity advisers in each research organization

• to improve recognition and prevention of research misconduct

• to promote responsible conduct of research (RCR)
RI Advisers 2/2

• provide low-threshold confidential counselling in cases where a violation of RCR is alleged

• give confidential advice concerns related to research integrity or ethical issues more broadly

• help to distinguish whether an official process for handling misconduct (HTK) is needed
Ethical review in Human Sciences
Ethical review in human sciences 1/2

- Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences and proposals for ethical review (2009)
  -> revision 2019: The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland
The research plan must be submitted to ethical review if the study contains any of the following features:

1. The study deviates from the principle of informed consent
2. The study involves an intervention in the physical integrity of subjects.
3. The subjects are children under the age of 15
4. The study exposes research subjects to exceptionally strong stimuli
5. The study may cause mental harm beyond the risks encountered in normal life.
6. The study can signify a security risk to subjects or to the researcher.
Authorship in scientific publishing
TENK’s recommendation

- Agreeing on authorship. Recommendation for research publications (2018)

  - The idea is to guide research projects on agreeing on principles of authorship as early as possible in order to prevent future authorship disputes

  - A general guideline that does not specify in detail the principles of authorship
Research Integrity Advisers
QUICK RECAP:

Thank you!

www.tenk.fi/en

Mervi Heikkinen